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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON  
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INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 6004

UNCLAS KINGSTON 000320

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EEB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FRANCISCA HELMER  
EEB/EX AWARDS COORDINATOR DEBRA STRUDWICK  
HR/PE ANNUAL AWARDS  
WHA/CAR - VELIA DEPIRRO, WILLARD SMITH, ANDREW CADIEUX

SANTO DOMINGO FOR FCS AND FAS

TREASURY FOR ERIN NEPHEW

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [APER](#) [ECON](#) [BEXP](#) [ETRD](#) [AMGT](#) [EAIR](#) [SOCI](#) [IBRD](#) [IMF](#) [CDB](#) [IBD](#)  
JM, XL  
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: 2009 HERBERT SALZMAN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE; NOMINATION FOR

REF: (A) STATE 18801 (272154Z FEB 09)  
(B) 08 KINGSTON 883 (091624Z OCT 08)

1.(SBU) This cable conveys the nomination of Embassy Kingston's Economic Officer, FS-03 Nathan C. Carter, for the 2009 Herbert Salzman Award for Excellence in International Economic Performance. The nominator is Kingston Political-Economic Counselor Lloyd W. Moss; Charg d' Affaires James T. Heg endorses the nomination. Reftel (B) provides an example of a reporting cable as supporting documentation. Post appreciates Department's consideration of Mr. Carter's nomination.

(Begin Text of Nomination)

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Jamaica's economic and social interaction with, and dependence on, the USA is broad and deep. Over the course of the last year, the island nation's economy has weathered the most severe storms since the 1930s. Negative growth; a crushing debt burden; resurgent inflation; high unemployment; currency depreciation; contracting tourism, mining, shipping, and remittances; inefficient tax collection; unsustainable losses by state-owned entities; severe hurricane damage to agriculture; and per capita rates of murder and oil importation among the world's highest - all have combined to raise an ominous specter: unless the USA wants another Haiti on its doorstep within a decade, we must help Jamaica meet these formidable challenges. Mr. Nathan Carter is doing so -- in ways as innovative as they are impressive.

Last year, The Economist magazine ranked Jamaica among the worst places in the world to pay taxes, with byzantine regulations and abysmal compliance rates. To help the Ministry of Finance design and implement reforms sought by the newly-elected Government, Nathan contacted the U.S. Department of the Treasury to seek assistance from the Office of Overseas Technical Assistance (OTA). On the strength of several excellent cables he had drafted on tax reform, and using funding he had obtained through USAID, OTA sent a six-person assessment team to visit Kingston. This delegation had one week of intensive meetings with the highest levels of the Ministry of Finance, in addition to major stakeholders in the private sector. Their assessment is an important tool for developing strategies for widening the tax net and increasing revenue collection in Jamaica - both crucial to the country's future. Teams from OTA will return for another eight weeks to help address issues and implement reforms identified in the assessment.

To reduce Jamaica's sky-high oil imports, Nathan has assisted the

Government of Jamaica (GoJ) in efforts to help develop the island's potential for renewable energy. Under the auspices of the Embassy Science Fellow program, he prepared an innovative proposal to bring a USA-based expert in renewables to assist the Ministry of Energy over several months with structuring and implementing its ambitious biofuels initiative. Nathan also serves as a member of the GoJ's recently established Biofuels Task-Force, and coordinates closely regarding Jamaica's participation in the U.S.-Brazil Biofuels Partnership, under which the GoJ will receive some \$250,000 in technical assistance from the OAS.

Nathan's work with the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) on projects to foster trade and business development has been of critical importance to the GoJ's fiscal prospects, which cannot improve until it divests the beleaguered national carrier Air Jamaica. He played a key role in arranging a \$820,000 USTDA grant to the Ministry of Finance to assist in the privatization of the airline, and coordinated the visit of the USTDA Director Larry Walther and Country Manager for the Andean and Caribbean Regions Jorge Esteban for the signing ceremony. They wrote in appreciation: "We at USTDA are very grateful for the work you do in country and for the fine support you provide USTDA on a regular basis. We look forward to continuing our relationship and to great things occurring in Jamaica in the future." Nathan also worked with USTDA and the Ministry of Energy to send a three-person team from Jamaica on an orientation visit to the USA to study waste-to-energy technology, and secured additional funding for a definitional mission from USTDA to bring a consultant to Kingston to help the Ministry develop its Request-for-Proposal, which the GoJ released in January, 2009. The proposal seeks bidders for two solid waste-to-energy projects on the island, and U.S. firms are strong contenders.

In the key area of intellectual property rights (IPR), Nathan

single-handedly organized a training workshop for 50 key members of the Jamaican judiciary, law enforcement, IPR office, customs, and various private sector entities. Participants included the Chief Justice, Commissioner of Customs, and Commissioner of Police. This was the first time such a comprehensive workshop on IPR enforcement had been held in the country's history. Innovatively, Nathan brought in three-time Olympic gold medalist Usain Bolt and five famous reggae singers to press home the importance of IPR to an appreciative audience.

With dogged perseverance, Nathan resolved all remaining outstanding issues to enable the successful conclusion of the Open Skies Aviation Agreement, which had been in negotiations since 2002. He personally drafted the speech for the Ambassador who signed the treaty on October 30, 2008, thus fulfilling a key U.S. policy goal.

Nathan worked diligently to successfully recover \$3.5 million in arrears owed to the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol by the national carrier Air Jamaica. Currently, he is adroitly employing his talents to recover another \$1.5 million in arrears that the airline owes the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service program. In assisting the U.S. business community to support investment and facilitate resolution of commercial disputes, Nathan has achieved noteworthy successes. When a USA-based firm with a major contract for a water project with Jamaica's National Housing Trust (NHT) was unable to secure payment, Nathan's personal intervention with NHT representatives resulted in the company's receipt of payment in full. The firm wrote a letter to the Embassy stating "This was our first experience with the Embassy and to classify it as successful would be an understatement.

We look forward to a long and prosperous relationship with the Jamaican government and we are much more confident knowing that you are there to help."

Nathan's astute conceptual thinking led him to submit prescient front-channel reporting warning of the imminent collapse of several major pyramid investment schemes in Jamaica. He also alerted The Jamaican Ministry of Finance to the dangers; in part as a result of his efforts, the Government embarked on a carefully-orchestrated media campaign to gradually lower public expectations so that, when the insolvent entities were unable to return funds to investors, a far more serious collapse of confidence in the entire financial system was averted.

When Tropical Storm Gustav bore down on Jamaica, Nathan coordinated swiftly and effectively with airport authorities and airlines to assess the status of air travel in and out of the island. After the passage of the storm, he immediately arranged to inspect devastated areas of the country, and produced timely situation reports which gave Washington highly accurate assessments of the severity of damage to crops, roads, and infrastructure.

Through all of Jamaica's travails of the last year, Nathan's polished, sophisticated reporting and analyses of everything from macroeconomic and financial market developments to the vital tourism and bauxite sectors have won accolades from the Washington interagency community. Speaking recently to the Office of the Inspector General, a senior end user described Kingston's economic reporting as "terrific - insightful, regular, current, and frequent." For its part, the Office of Policy Planning and Coordination in the WHA Bureau recently wrote to the Director of Caribbean Affairs: "I simply wanted to highlight the great econ reporting coming out of Embassy Kingston (attached Kingston 245 - CONFIDENTIAL). We've been following their updates over the last year on the IMF program and now the deteriorating economic situation. The reporting is very well written and informative, and has provided us...ammunition to argue for increased foreign assistance for Jamaica. Tell them to keep them coming!" Reftel report, Will Financial Crisis Rock Jamaica?, provides a good example of Nathan's consistently outstanding work.

Suggested Citation

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"For advancement of key U.S. international economic objectives, superior reporting, and furtherance of policy goals while serving as Economic Officer of the Embassy of the USA in Kingston, Jamaica, in the areas of macroeconomics, the energy and aviation sectors, and intellectual property rights."

(End Text of Nomination)

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